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THE ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

ON EARTH PEACE. . . . NATION SHALL NOT LIFT UP SWORD AGAINST NATION, NEITHER SHALL THEY LEARN WAR ANY MORE.

NEW SERIES.

BOSTON, SEPTEMBER, 1869.

No. 9.

SUBSTITUTES FOR WAR.

War will of course continue until something better is found to take its place. Every one who will examine the subject with any tolerable degree of care and candor, must see that expedients might be devised far better than the sword for all purposes of either justice or safety. We propose such substitutes — *Negotiation, Mediation, Arbitration, a Congress of Nations.*

Here, then, are four substitutes for war, each simple, easy and effective; substitutes which every man of the least sense or candor must admit to be infinitely better than an appeal to the savage argument of lead and steel; substitutes which recognize right instead of might, reason in place of brute force, as the arbiter of national disputes; substitutes which nations could, if they would, adopt in part, without delay, and ere long the whole of them; substitutes which would at once supersede every plea of necessity for war, insure far more justice in the intercourse of nations, and guaranty in due time their permanent peace and prosperity.

Now, we insist on the duty of nations to adopt such substitutes as these. If they are moral agents like individuals, they are equally bound to an amicable, bloodless adjustment of their difficulties; and, if war is held by none to be justifiable except as a last resort, and should never be employed till after all other expedients have failed, then must nations, on the lowest principles of peace or common sense, abstain from the sword until they have not only tried in good faith negotiation, reference and mediation, but established a congress of nations, and submitted their disputes to its high and impartial arbitrament. All this they *can* do, if they *will*; and, until they do so, how can war be called their *last* resort?

‘But nations have no common judge, and hence they *must* decide each its own case.’ True, they have *at present* no such judge; but they *might* have, if they *would*; and we call upon them by every motive of reason, duty and self-interest, to establish one as soon as possible.

‘Meanwhile, however, what shall settle their disputes?’ Surely not the sword, but some one of the substitutes we propose. War settles disputes! Never; the parties invariably sheath the sword before they dream of a settlement, and then dispatch, not men of blood to fight, but men of peace, plenipotentiaries, to negotiate. Now, why not do this *before* fighting, and thus obviate all necessity of war?

‘True, if the parties were willing; but can you make them willing before they have fought awhile?’ — Yes, we could, if we would; but how little effort is made for peace in comparison with what *must* be for war? No two nations could *begin* a war in earnest without sacrificing, in one way and another, scores of millions; but a tenth or even a hundredth part as much, if wisely spent in the use of moral means for the purpose, would form such a public sentiment, that no power on earth could goad the parties into conflict. — Unwilling for a peaceful adjustment! who is unwilling? Am I? Are you? We resent the charge; and, should you go among any people through both countries, you would find scarce a man that would not profess to be equally anxious for a bloodless issue of the dispute.

‘Perhaps the *people* are willing; but the *rulers* are not.’ Rulers not willing! Why not? Because the *people* do not call *loud* enough for a peaceful settlement. Rulers will generally go either for peace or for war, just as the people go; they *can*, if they will, settle their disputes without war, quite as well as individuals can theirs without duels; they *will* do so, whenever the people shall come every where to demand it aright; the people *will thus demand it*, whenever they shall be duly enlightened on the subject; and hence do we urge the pulpit and the press, every sect in religion, and every party in politics, all Christians, philanthropists and patriots, to unite in filling every community with such an abhorrence of war, and such strong desires for peace, as shall hereafter constrain rulers to employ pacific expedients alone for the settlement of all national disputes.

ARBITRATION.—Our government has been foremost in adopting this expedient for the settlement of international disputes. For such an adjustment of claims by some of our citizens against the government of Venezuela, a commission had been agreed upon, and its awards actually made, when the minister of Venezuela sought to set them aside for sundry reasons; but Mr. Seward, as one of the last acts of his long secretaryship, put his veto upon them thus: —

‘International tribunals for the adjudication of private claims are created by governments in no expectation that they are to escape that possible admixture of error which is inseparable from all human institutions. They are resorted to because the governments concerned have either actually